



## Perinton Blades – AA Squirt Minor Program

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The PYH Blades Squirt Minor AA team's training will be based upon [USA Hockey's American Development Model](#) (ADM). This is a research-based model of player development, and one that aligns well with my own coaching philosophy. I'll explain more about that later.

In the meantime, travel hockey—whether it's AA or AAA—is a commitment. I hope the information below helps guide your decision making over the next few weeks.

### Season Plan

The season will begin in late August or early September, and conclude in late February or early March.

**Practices** – We will have 2-3 practices per week, preferably on the same days for consistency. We'll typically share the ice with another team, and occasionally a third team to get the additional ice time.

**Off-ice Training** – Four team sessions at [Next Level Strength and Conditioning](#) are included in the cost of the AA program. We will schedule additional off-ice sessions throughout the season designed to develop well-rounded athletes and promote team building. The sessions will incorporate a variety of sports and games, such as road hockey, soccer, lacrosse, cross training, and stretching and mobility.

**Games** – We will participate in the [Western New York Amateur Hockey League](#), which includes 16-18 regular season games plus the playoff tournament. We will schedule additional games against opponents of our choosing throughout the season.

**Tournaments** – We'll participate in at least 2-3 tournaments throughout the season, including out-of-town travel. Traveling to tournaments is always a lot of fun and is truly a memorable experience for players and their families. There is plenty of good competition nearby, so we won't go too far. Some possible destinations include Buffalo, Syracuse, Cleveland, Toronto, and Lake Placid.

**Social Gatherings** – We will have a number of team events, including a pre-season kickoff party and end of season party for players and their families.

# Composition of the team

## Players

I plan to carry 13-15 skaters, plus one full-time goaltender on the roster. One or two other team members will serve as alternate goaltenders. We will also “roster” additional Squirt Minor eligible goaltenders from the PYH program that will be utilized in case of emergencies.

Game line-ups will typically consist of three forward lines and two or three sets of defenseman. Only a single goaltender will dress for most games.

Each player will have an opportunity to skate every position. Players will cycle through center, wing, and defense in “phases” that could last 2-4 weeks. This allows enough time for each player to learn by practicing and playing games at each position.

In general, ice time will be evenly distributed across the team. At this age, I don’t believe in “shortening the bench” in hopes of winning a game. Every player will have the opportunity to score that last second game-winning goal and be the “hero.”

## Coaching Staff

The coaching staff will include one or two full-time assistant coaches plus additional “practice coaches.” I would like to have a minimum of four coaches on the ice for every practice in order to provide as much individual player instruction as possible.

## Administration

The team will have a full-time team manager and a scheduler. One parent could potentially fill both roles.

# My Coaching Philosophy

Even at 10U everyone wants to win games, including me, but not at the expense of skill development. The success of our season will not be measured by wins and losses, but rather by the smiles on the players’ faces, their advancements on and off the ice, and their continued passion for the game.

As I mentioned earlier, the team’s training program will be based on USA Hockey’s American Development Model (ADM). I will also incorporate more advanced age-appropriate training techniques that are currently being utilized by hockey development programs in Sweden, Russia, and Canada.

Research from USA Hockey shows that our 8-and-9-year-old players are hitting their optimum window of trainability, meaning this is the age when skill-based development has the greatest effect. I will take full advantage of this window during our practices, with a

focus on puck control, skating, shooting, dekes, one-timers, passing, puck battles, and developing “hockey sense” through lots of small-area scrimmaging.

While hockey systems and strategy are an important part of the game, I will intentionally keep this training to a minimum. This philosophy aligns with Hockey Canada’s Player Development Pyramid, which shows that concepts like breakouts, forechecking schemes, neutral zone positioning, power plays, and penalty kill are better suited for older age groups. For example, you can easily teach a teenager the dump and chase forecheck. My focus for the 2015-16 season will be to develop a team of “[Patrick Kanes](#),” not “Patrick Kaletas.”

## About Me

I grew up in Greece where I played Rochester Youth Hockey. I then moved onto Greece High School ('94), Rochester Junior B Americans, and finally Kent State University ('99). I also officiated for 25 years including 10 years as a NCAA Division I and III referee

I currently reside in Fairport with my wife Julie and our three sons Jack (8), Matthew (6), and Danny (4). I work in IT Management at MVP Health Care and in my free time I enjoy camping, hiking, and crossfit.

Thanks for taking the time to read this information. If you have any questions please contact me at [585-750-1237](tel:585-750-1237) or [mnapieralski@yahoo.com](mailto:mnapieralski@yahoo.com). See you at the rink.

Sincerely,

Mike Napieralski

Attachments area

Preview YouTube video ADM U10 Hockey - American Development Model



Preview YouTube video Patrick Kane amazing (scattered pucks) stick handling drill

